

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00  
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-02 INR-10 INT-05  
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FM AMCONSUL PALERMO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2445

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT IT

SUBJECT: SICILIAN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY VOTES CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT  
PROGRAM.

REF: A. PALERMO 0331 B. PALERMO 0329.

1. SUMMARY: IN AN APRIL 5, VOTE, 5-PARTY MAJORITY VOTED CONFIDENCE  
IN THE NEW SICILIAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM. INDIVIDUAL GIUNTA  
ASSIGNMENTS ARE EXPECTED SOON FOLLOWING APRIL 6 ASSEMBLY APPROVAL  
OF REGIONAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION PLAN. END SUMMARY.

2. ON APRIL 5, THE SICILIAN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY VOTED TO APPROVE  
PRESIDENT MATTARELLA'S DRAFT PROGRAM, IN ACTION WHICH AMOUNTED TO  
A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN HIS GOVERNMENT. THOUGH OTHER MEMBERS OF  
THE GIUNTA HAVE YET TO BE NAMED, APRIL 6 ASSEMBLY APPROVAL OF A  
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION PLAN SHOULD CLEAR THE WAY  
FOR EARLY NOMINATIONS TO INDIVIDUAL ASSESSORATES. ALL FIVE PARTIES  
OF THE NEW ASSEMBLY MAJORITY (DC-PCI-PSI-PSDI-PRI) VOTED TO BACK  
THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM. THE LIBERALS ABSTAINED, AND THE MSI  
AND NATIONAL DEMOCRATS VOTED AGAINST. THOUGH THE LIBERAL  
ABSTENTION CAME AT THE LAST MINUTE TO MATCH THE PARTY'S NATIONAL  
POSTURE, MATTARELLA KEPT LINES OPEN BY THANKING THE PLI FOR ITS  
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CONTRIBUTION IN DEVELOPING HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM.

3. THE ESSENCE OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAM IS CONTAINED IN THE FOLLOWING  
PARAGRAPH FROM THE REMARKS WITH WHICH MATTARELLA PRESENTED IT TO  
THE ASSEMBLY: "SICILY EXPECTS THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER  
THE 'SICILIAN PROBLEM' AS A CENTRAL NATIONAL ISSUE IN THE BROADER  
CONTEST OF THE MEZZOGIORNO. TO DATE, THE STATE HAS BEEN EITHER  
RELUCTANT TO DECENTRALIZEFUNCTIONS TO WHICH THE REGION IS ENTITLED

UNDERITS AUTONOMOUS STATUTE AND WHENEVER IT DOES ASSIGN FUNCTIONS TO THE REGION, THE STATE DEPRIVES IT OF THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES NECESSARY TO MEET ITS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES. THE REGION IS PREPARED TO FIGHT FOR ITS LEGITIMATE PREROGATIVES. HOWEVER, IT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE FOR THE REGION TO BECOME A CREDIBLE PARTNER OF THE STATE BY BEING MORE RIGOROUS, EFFICIENT,PROMPT AND CAPABLE OF RESPECTING THE GENERAL INTEREST".

4. TO ACHIEVE GREATER CREDIBILITY AS THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S PARTNER, MATTARELLA'S PROGRAM PROPOSALS SET THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES: REFORM OF THE REGIONAL BUREAUCRACY, LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND THE INTRODUCTION OF REGION-WIDE ECONOMIC PLANNING. ON AN URGENT BASIS, THE GOVERNMENT PLANS ALSO TO ATTACK YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY STAGNATION AND TO TAKE EMERGENCY MEASURES TO OTHERWISE ATTENUATE THE LOCAL IMPACT OF THE NATIONAL RECESSION. OVER THE LONGER RUN, THE NEW REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL THROUGH REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND CREDIT INCENTIVES, DEVOTE PRIORITY ATTENTION TO AGRICULTURE AND TO SMALL OR MEDIUM-SIZE INDUSTRY.SPECIAL PROGRAMS WILL ALSO BE LAUNCHED ON WATER-RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, TOURISM, THE FISHING INDUSTRY, COOPERATIVES AND ENERGY. IN THE LATTER CONTEXT, THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT PLEDGES TO STUDY VERY CAREFULLY THE PROJECTED CONSTRUCTION IN SICILY OF A CANDU NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (REF. B.).

5. AS TO THE MAKE-UP OF HIS ASSEMBLY MAJORITY(WHICH INCLUDES FULL PCI PARTICIPATION IN EVERYTHING BUT THE GIUNTA)MATTARELLA IN PRESENT-ING HIS PROGRAM NOTED THE EXISTENCE OF A "NEW MAJORITY" AND CREDITED ALL OF ITS COMPETENT PARTIES WITH PERMITTING A  
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"POSITIVE" CHANGE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE REGION. IN AN APRIL 6 PRESS INTERVIEW, HOWEVER, MATTARELLA SAID HE DID NOT SEE THE CONDITIONS FOR COMMUNISTS PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REGION.

6. COMMENT: WE THINK MATTARELLA'S PROGRAM HAS THE RIGHT "SETTING" IN ITS ASSIGNMENT AND ACCEPTANCE OF ITS OWN RESPONSIBILITY VIS-A-VIS THOSE OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. WE ALSO THINK THE PROGRAM IDENTIFIES THE RIGHT PROBLEMS AND SETS THE RIGHT PRIORITIES IN ATTACKING THEM. MATTARELLA'S OWN LENGTH EXPERIENCE IN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AND SOLID PERFORMANCE IN THE KEY BUDGET ASSESSORATE AS WELL AS NEW AND STRONGER BLOOD IN THE INDIVIDUAL ASSESSORATES PROMPT HOPE THAT AFTER FOUR MONTHS OF REGIONAL GOVERN-  
MENT CRISIS "SICILIAN PROBLEM" WILL BEGIN TO GET THE ATTENTION IT DESERVES. COLLINS

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## Message Attributes

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